

- - - Reply to Non-Final Office Action- - -

Prior to examination on the merits, please amend the above-identified US patent application as follows:

In the Specification:

- Please add three paragraphs, 7.2, 7.4 and 7.6 below paragraph 7.0 as follows:

- [7.2] It is important to make sure a body piercing will not damage the piercing channel once the piercing is installed and worn. To ensure this, the decorative and attachment ends of the piercing section have a diameter of approximately 0.15 inches, which ensures that the piercing does not get stuck or slip out through the piercing channel. In order to be able to securely attach the decorative and attachment ends to the piercing section, the diameter of the piercing section needs to be approximately 0.05 inches or more, whereas, an earring stud's diameter is about 0.01 inches. The length of the piercing section is approximately 0.65 inches or more, and the piercing section is worn essentially entirely within the piercing channel. Therefore, the piercing channel of a body piercing itself is also approximately 0.65 inches or more, while the length of an earring's piercing channel is approximately 0.12 inches or so.
- [7.4] The reason for both the longer and thicker body piercing pin is to make sure the piercing does not cut into the internal tissue or rip the external opening to the piecing channel as the piercing moves under clothing, in the mouth, nose, etc. An earring, on the other hand, is not subjected to external stress, except when removing a sweater, or when the earring is pulled by a child or pet.
- [7.6] Body piercing pins are required to have essentially a constant diameter along their length, as the entrance and exit points in the skin are usually created with a single piercing needle, in a single operation, and so the entrance and exit to the piercing channel, as well as the piercing channel itself becomes the same size. The constant diameter of the piercing pin causes the piercing channel to form around the piercing pin as the piercing is allowed to heal. The constant diameter of the piercing channel then further assists in the distribution of stress.

- Please add two paragraphs, 10.2, 10.4 and 10.6 below paragraph 10.0 as follows:

[10.2] In Hernandez '974, if the combination of items 16, 18 & 10 is considered a "body piercing section", to be compared with the present invention, the secondary end (10) of the body piercing section (16) has a diameter that is not essentially constant along the length of the body piercing section. In the incident invention, the body piercing pin essentially has a constant diameter along its length.

[10.4] Hernandez '974 is an example of a patent that addresses the need for an earring to "break away" when experiencing moderate external stress. A body piercing, on the other hand, is usually designed to not allow the ends to separate accidentally but to distribute similar, moderate stress throughout the piercing channel.

[10.6] US Patent 4,195,492 to Johnson a similar arrangement to Hernandez is disclosed. These safety earrings are also easily removed, the body piercing pin is small, thin and straight and the piercing pin requires a non-removable "stop" to prevent it from slipping through the piercing channel.